THE COMMONWEAL

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A SENATORIAL HOLIDAY

IT HAS become clear that a senator is, after all, no whit different from the ordinary citizen. Coralled with his fellows into a special session for the purpose of considering the London Treaty, he finds (a) that he really doesn't know more about it than anybody else and (b) that the appropriateness of any stand he takes will be diversely estimated by the folks back home. Primarily he must manage to be a patriot, and since love of country hardly seems compatible with curtailing its military power he must be able to show his constituency that something has been gained for every cannon lost. This is really not so easy to do under the circumstances. The negotiators at London had to deal with a highly complex situation, in which European entanglements loomed large and conflicting notions of naval efficiency divided even the officers of the great powers. Since anything more than a compromise was out of the question, the value of the Treaty rests upon the sum-total of a series of minor changes.

Trying to get at the bottom of these in a manner worthy of men committed to the harvest of votes, the Senate has become a veritable summer-school in which, after an initial address by Mr. Hoover, the lecturing has been done in rotation. Some of it has been wordier and more pointless than the poorest discourse which distinguishes various universities basking under the caloric sun. The President's talk was neat, brisk and informative. It supplied the figures—which have been too frequently adduced to justify repetition here—and examined the major criticisms thus far advanced against the Treaty, more especially the argument that the United States should have three more 10,000-ton cruisers with eight-inch guns. Mr. Hoover then went on to say: "To those who seek earnestly and properly for reduction in warships I would point out that, as compared with January 1 of this year, the total aggregate navies of the three powers under this treaty will have been reduced by nearly 300,000 tons. Had a settlement been made at Geneva in 1927 upon the only proposal possible at that time, the fleets of the three powers would have been approximately 680,000 tons greater than under the Treaty now in consideration." Which comes near to being the most concrete plum harvested in the London orchard. It ought to be fairly simple to expatiate upon those 680,000 hypothetical tons until every one of them has been festooned with a metaphor and preserved in rhetorical alcohol.

But there has been other oratory in plenty, some of

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it frankly anti-Hoover and some of it unrelievedly jingoistic. The discussion of the Senate's right to see all the documents bearing upon the negotiations—which is as far as the summer-school has got at the present writing—may be very important as a practical factor but is intrinsically sheer piffle. Every senator knows that he can walk around the block and take a look at every telegram and report. He likewise realizes that to air private diplomatic messages in public is not only against solidly established precedent but also a potential source of grave embarrassment to the administration in dealing with foreign countries. Nevertheless this debate is not entirely a matter of le roi s'amuse. Opposition to the Treaty might profit by digging out some remarks which, when spun into certain forms of publicity, would stiffen the backs of patriotic last-ditchers. At any rate the spinning out would take time and so load the Senate with future business.

The heart of the opposition is Hiram Johnson. And the tonic which keeps that sturdy organ pumping merrily away is something he diagnoses as fear of Great Britain but which is in reality the same "anti-entaglement" policy which, after 1919, won him repute and applause. It is inconceivable, of course, that an England not turned utterly insane would seek war with us because of a treaty which pares a thirty-four point margin of actual superiority down to a two point margin of theoretical superiority. Nor does Senator Johnson believe in the possibility of such a conflict. What he is opposing is the assumption underlying any discussion of armament which begins with conceding that the admirals of His Majesty are entitled to as many ships as the admirals of the Navy Board. Here he has far more support throughout the country than is generally realized; and while he probably will not succeed in the present instance, it is apparent that the effort to secure American diplomatic and military parity needs more aggressive leadership than it now gets.

Owing to the vastness of the country, regional differences and vast disparities between the journals which supply news and comment, public opinion in the United States exhibits a truly remarkable, almost unfathomable congeries of planes of information. Political events and ideas exist in any number of different spaces and times. While students of political economy and other people close to events are abreast of ideas and affairs, whole sections of the nation really live in 1920 while still others are as far back as Roosevelt's time or the Spanish-American War. It is this fact which most conveniently accounts for otherwise unfathomable political backfiring. It means incidentally that government has need of something more than a sound case and doctrine—personality and diplomatic skill, to which all groups of citizenry are far more amenable than they are to reasoning or statistics. One naturally finds the present divorce between case and personality a bit trying. But if governments had not witnessed the same paralyzing divorce time and time again, the records of our race would be almost too good to be true.

WEEK BY WEEK

UNTIL the report, now completed, of the League of Nations Mandates Commission on the Palestine riots of last year is published, which will be several weeks from now, official secrecy will surround the document. However, it is known that the Commission's investigations have led it to a much severer criticism of Great Britain's policies before the Jewish-Arabian clashes occurred than was expressed by Britain's own body of inquiry, the Shaw Commission. The League investigators have evidently come to the same conclusion as was reached by most informed opinion last August: that the withdrawal from Palestine garrisons and police depots of their normal armed strength was responsible for the scope and violence of the rioting, if not for its outbreak. The report is also said, on excellent authority, to touch upon the Wailing Wall controversy, and, further, to embody a recommendation that a "constitutional régime" be instituted in Palestine. As to the first—the legal division between hostile religions of a spot sacred to worship in the history of both—it will be interesting to see what specific suggestions the published findings make on a matter which probably cannot be peacefully compromised. As to the institution of a "constitutional régime," that sounds like the representative parliament for which the Arabs have been insistently clamoring.

Britain in Palestine

THE Zionists have opposed the measure just as determinedly, since the Jews are outnumbered in Palestine by something like six to one. Their dependence, until the Jewish national home is thoroughly established is, and must be, not any representative governing body such as is normal to western communities, but the promises of direct help and special protection from the British government embodied in the Balfour Declaration. We noted some weeks ago that both British and American Zionists are outspoken in their charges that Britain is hedging on those promises as much as she dares to. The recent suspension of 2,300 immigration permits into Palestine was made the subject of challenge to Lord Passfield, the Colonial Secretary, by a deputation of British Zionists. His reply, just published—that there has been no stoppage of Jewish immigration, but that it must be "determined by the absorptive capacity of the country"—will beyond doubt be construed by his questioners as a favoring gesture to the Arabs. If in addition the League Mandates Commission actually advocates a "constitutional," that is, presumably, a parlimentary, régime, it is hard to see how the Balfour Declaration can endure at anything like its par value. It is to be expected, however, that the Declaration sooner or later will have to be considerably amended. England's proverbial talent for "muddling through" seems here to be offered a test case of unusual and serious difficulties.

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PRIMO DE RIVERA'S departure from the scene left Spanish politics more than relatively awry. One knew at the time and could since observe almost breathlessly the swift currents which all but carried public opinion to extremes. That things remained fairly tranquil may have been due to a stalemate among the military factions, General Anido favoring a new dictatorship and his opponents sponsoring nothing more drastic than a constitutional monarchy. What is certain is that a drift toward republicanism was apparent even among supporters of the monarchy, like M. Sanchez Guerra. Efforts by the King to unite political leaders in favor of some definite program led, at least, to the discovery that even the most conservative among them opposed a new dictatorship. Beyond that there was little unanimity of opinion, some favoring a new constitution and others advocating a return to the old. The recall of M. Santiago Alba by Alfonso himself is extremely significant, since this enemy of the dictatorship and refugee in France was regarded by all sides as the sine qua non of a peaceful settlement. More recently other exiles have come back into the Spanish fold, and one thinks that the country is earnestly seeking to adopt a governmental order similar to that of Belgium. The conduct of General Berenguer has been exemplary for sanity and patriotic idealism.

Unsettled Spain

THE universal Church daily offers especial prayers for the well-being of the Sovereign Pontiff. These have been offered with especial fervor during recent days, owing to reports that Pope Pius was in ill health. It has for some time been noted that he shoulders so many tasks with such vigor as to have aroused long since the fears of his associates. Pertinax, in his remarkable book on the Roman question, draws a particularly graphic portrait of the Holy Father, who insists upon maintaining personal contact not merely with the heads of the Sacred Congregations and the administrative bureaus but also with the clergy and laity of all lands. The number of addresses he delivers, all of which demand care lest some misconstruction be laid upon this and that word, is remarkable. Most trying of all have been the great undertakings of his reign—the inauguration of Catholic action, the numerous canonization proceedings, the settlement of the Roman question and the subsequent argument with Mussolini, the conflict with l'Action Française and the trials incident to the status of the Church in Mexico and Russia. That a man no longer in the prime of life should have dealt so resolutely with all these is an extraordinary phenomenon. The admiration and gratitude of the faithful will, undoubtedly, be reflected these days in the increased fervor with which petitions will be offered throughout the entire Christian world for the continued health and renewed vigor of our Holy Father, the Vicar of Christ.

For Our Father, the Pope

TRIBUTES to Max Reinhardt on the occasion of his twenty-fifth anniversary as a director have come from pretty nearly everywhere. Certainly the man who started life as a poor boy in western Germany and who now lives in the proudest castle in Salzburg is proof of the fact that the world pays what it applauds. There have been times when one wondered if the quality was as good as the reception. But Reinhardt has always triumphed over such doubts by his success in evoking what was best in contemporary poets and actors—the fundamental test of a director's greatness. Virtually all the impressive theatrical artists of modern Germany have learned from him; and he not only revealed to the world the forgotten genius of Büchner but kindled anew the creative activity of Schnitzler and Von Hoffmansthal. The newest dramatic writing has, it is true, served a different master, and Rheinhardt's work is definitely bound up with the neo-romantic protest against naturalism. He never claimed to be a thinker but tried hard to remain a poet. Accordingly Henry Bidou's tribute seems pertinent: "He applied not a formula but an infinite number of formulas, according to circumstances, or the works he was interpreting, or the suggestion of his own fancy. He has created a throng of diverse enchantments, magic worlds born for an evening, made of colored light, rhythms, human voices and faces."

Manager by Acclamation

THE Lay Retreat Movement, apparently just discovered by Mr. H. L. Mencken, has received his official endorsement. In fact that Thor of Baltimore waxes so enthusiastic over the idea that he proposes—see The Way of Escape in the American Mercury for July—to adapt the method of Loyola to the cure of his favorite bête noire, the Babbitt. Thus his hypocritical congressmen who vote dry and drink wet, his "political bosses, newspaper editors, chain-store magnates and other evil men" who are constantly beset with temptations may be left to holy houses, there to give themselves to plain living and high thinking. But let the majority of us who, lacking the temptation, are perforce exemplary; whose trouble, indeed, is not that we fall too often into sin, but that we are too often blackjacked into virtue—let these, Mr. Mencken says, make another kind of a retreat as antithetical to the Manresas of the country as hell is to heaven. A night-club hostess would be in charge of Mr. Mencken's retreat. She would have with her a corps of dancing girls, waiters and bartenders, and a booklegger offering Rabelaisian printed matter. The retreatants would arise at noon, imbibe a couple of Manhattans before a hearty breakfast, followed by a service of ribald songs. The order for the rest of the day and far into the night would be in consonance. Three days, a week of this régime, Mr. Mencken feels, would "do a lot of good to multitudes of suffering men." He fails to state if these are to be drafted for

Mr. Mencken's Manresa

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certainly he must realize that at present his Babbitts, who need look neither long nor hard to discover all that he proposes to give them, would not willingly join his pilgrimage.

The Impredicable Jones

SOMETHING should be said about Bobby Jones. But what? The trouble is not merely that everything that can be said has already been said to the point of satiety; it is also that there is a certain difficulty of approach inherent in the subject himself. The legend that has grown up around this young giant of the greens differs from all the other sporting legends of our ballyhoo-ridden times in being true. When he wins it is no longer news, and when he loses it is not a sport upset but a scientific curiosity. The imagination cannot really keep up with such a prodigy of skill and stamina, and after a while it stops trying. It is a psychological fact, though a most ungracious comment, that for the imagination's purposes, half as much would go twice as far. Bobby is widely loved because he is genuinely modest, because he mingles a boyish intentness with the artist's grim obsession with perfection, because he is a model of sportsmanship; but it is no longer possible to get into a frenzy of excitement over what he has done. He is twenty-eight years old, and has held the world's major titles twelve times since he turned twenty-one. So far in this fabulous year, he has won three of them over again: the two British championships and the American open, in which he played the most brilliant round ever recorded in a tournament. He will almost beyond question win the American amateur this fall. And it is simply too much for our money. We cannot take it in.

Damien's Successor

BROTHER JOSEPH DUTTON'S career is nearing its close. Infirm, almost blind and worn out by eighty-seven years of active life, the man who went half a century ago to assist Father Damien among the lepers of Molokai has now been brought back to Honolulu for medical care. He saw the last hours of the famous missionary, stricken with the ghastly plague; and to him was confided that sublime mission of service and sanctity which all the world has envied. The reasons why Brother Joseph went to Molokai are not, however, so mysterious as they may seem. He had been a captain in a Civil War regiment. Humdrum existence—making money, chatting with friends—no longer satisfied him, and after he had come into the Church something constantly urged him to seek out a work of heroism. Damien's Molokai was then talked about everywhere. Stevenson had written his stirring defense of the missionary. Father Tabb, Charles Warren Stoddard and others had immortalized the leper island. Nobody was more deeply impressed with the situation than Father Hudson, editor of the Ave Maria, who had long before sent aid, in the form of ecclesiastical equipment to Damien. We strongly suspect that it was through Father Hudson that Brother Joseph's decision ripened into fact. At any rate, his trip to Molokai was an expression of American Catholic idealism in just the same way as contemporary missionary effort in the Orient voices current aspiration and courage.

Chicago in Meditation

FRESH supplies of murdered Chicago gangsters have helped out conversation just when it was beginning to flag. Advertising had almost convinced us that the metropolis of the Middle-West was no worse than any other town (and it really isn't) when the news of the Lingle and other killings spoiled everything. Scrutiny of Lingle's affairs revealed the opportunities which now confront the bright young man who goes in for crime news—tips of several varieties, cronies in gangland and on the police force, the ignorance of one's employers. But to date nobody has found out anything much more specific than that there are gangs and rackets. Physicians have, of course, pretty well diagnosed the fundamental disease. Politically speaking, Chicago is so nearly divided between two parties that elections can be swayed by lawless elements in control of enough votes to swing the decision. That means concessions, compromises, protection. The party lines are drawn so tight that running an independent is much like telling the family you will run the town yourself. Hope seems to reside chiefly in the possibility that the gangsters will some time get themselves reduced to two, whereupon the familiar drama first enacted by the Kilkenny cats may be staged in the vast stadium to the delight and edification of all.

Hackensack Makes Amends

WHEN Mr. Galsworthy visited us, a few years ago, his play, The Mob, was being put on in Grand Street. He went down with a friend to see the performance, and either because he was absent-minded and had forgotten his purse, or because he was prudent and chose not to spend money unnecessarily, he requested the doorman to pass them in. The doorman demurred. "But I am Mr. Galsworthy," he protested. We do not recall the exact words of the reply, but it was pitched to the same note of ironic incredulity as the classic "And I am Napoleon Bonaparte"; and then ensued a great deal of earnest identifying. Now, at long last, Hackensack comes forward to pay the debt of courtesy to the distinguished writer which America then incurred. That city's telephone traffic engineer has been reading The Forsyte Saga, and simultaneously (it would appear) pondering possible names for a new exchange. He is alike taken by the book and impressed by the phonetic correctness of the author's name. The consequence is that Hackensack is to have an exchange called "Galsworthy," so that, for one ticket-taker in Grand Street who did not recognize the author's face, there will be an indefinite number of New Jerseyites to whom his name is a household word.

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CRITICS AND PEDESTALS

IT IS difficult to imagine Madison Square Garden filled with an excited crowd watching two hostile groups of scientists pummeling each other over such a matter as a theory of light. Indeed, the laboratory is almost frighteningly urbane. Hypotheses triumph over one another without making anybody do more than learn the intricacies of the latest one. When a disturbance does occur (as in the recent diverting Glozel affair), it is because the evidence lies beyond the domain of test-tubes and formulas. But if things continue to move as they do now in the land of American criticism, it is fair to anticipate at least an occasional bout between a humanist and his adversary. Possibly the disciples of Professor Babbitt will add the martial virtues to their list, and go abroad with bludgeons—there's nothing modern about a bludgeon! —despatching uproarious Bohemians and rebels. Mr. Seward Collins, editor of the Bookman and ardent convert to humanism, would seem to us the very man to act as armorer and generalissimo.

In the June number of his magazine, Mr. Collins presents the first of two articles outlining the history of recent criticism. The thesis is a dual one: first, that "in power of thought, in breadth of scholarship, in force of presentation, it is being generally recognized that Babbitt and More operate on a plane far above any comparable work in English today and the equal of any in the world"; second, that their opponents are an assemblage of mythopeic nitwits addicted to "truths, half-truths, quarter-truths, one-tenth-truths, whole-cloth lies, mangled quotations, misrepresentative examples, distorting paraphrases, omitted contexts." The proof of this rather highly spiced pudding is extracted from the writings of the opposition—Messrs. Mencken, Brooks, Bourne, Mumford inter aliis. One should like to examine into it a little, but even so it is interesting and primarily militant.

This last named militancy is for us the central point. Fighting tactics reappeared in American literary journalism with Mr. Mencken and almost immediately became modish. The boys all liked his vocabulary as much, or more, than old-fashioned Democrats had enjoyed the congressional diction of pitchfork Ben. It is curious to observe that as Mencken grew older the fight centred almost entirely in the words. The things he was combating grew fewer and steadily less literary. His criticism had the effect not of railroading bad authors to the morgue but of making some—not necessarily good—authors popular. While Mencken was snarling at the professors, the number and salaries of these increased—and their work was published extensively in the American Mercury. By comparison the tactics of the other fighter of the same epoch, Professor Babbitt, had almost the opposite effect. Here the vocabulary had mass and displacement power but virtually no appeal. And so Babbitt never succeeded in impressing either a new writer or an idea upon his generation. Inside the domain of education, however, the things he fought gave way increasingly to his uncompromising broadsides. The elective principle, for instance, has never enjoyed good health since Babbitt's treatises trounced it. In short: the total result of Menckenism (which need not be limited to one man) has been the popularizing and promotion of certain writings; and the total result of Babbittism has been the relative demolition of sundry notions which were once current.

Now it seems to an impartial observer of these phenomena that one grave danger impends. A militaristic attitude is in constant danger of weariness—or, to apply the point to criticism specifically, of ruining the bore of the doctrinal musket by firing too long and steadily. For example: the genuine value of humanism lies in its ability to oppose errors, while its worth as an incentive to creative effort must be quoted at present as near zero; and if the effectiveness of Mencken has lain in the business of making elbow room for favorite new authors, his ability to correct their mistakes or manners is wofully lacking. These limitations are of the most serious importance because they are characteristic of American literature as a whole. If one is no longer able to believe that Mencken can keep on making the right kind of elbow room, or that Professor Babbitt can continue indefinitely as a significant party of the minority, the outlook for both is hardly interesting.

Is there any chance for a more objective—possibly a more urbane—conception of the whole matter? Grant the usefulness of the humanists and of their traditionalism. It is nevertheless impossible for any wholly unbiased person to believe that all wisdom and every sound intuition have been gobbled up by a professor of Romance languages at Harvard. The power of urbanity resides in the fact that it is an antidote against believing in any such incongruous possibilities. You may well say that urbanity suffers from not being sufficiently martial. It doubtless does induce the best French and English criticism, that of Saintsbury and Brémond, to deal with letters and art in the same spirit of seeking enjoyment as is assumed by the citizen interested in golf or rosebuds. That may not be possible in a country where the convert to something or other is the most native of products. But when the contemporary United States produces as good a critic as Brémond, or as good a poet as Robert Bridges, it will be because the doctrine of criticism has given way to the art of criticism. Can it be true that women, characteristically the less belligerent sex, have outdistanced men in our letters through sheer abstinence from critical trenches and bombs? Somehow one cannot imagine Emily Dickinson thumbing the pages of Rousseau and Romanticism, or Agnes Repplier waiting for the plaudits of Mr. Mencken. In both cases this indifference seems to have done no great harm. Who knows but that it might even accomplish a little good nowadays?

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THE NEWARK GUILD

By MARY KOLARS

Emphasis placed upon Catholic action during recent months has seemed to not a few purely theoretical in character. But have we forgotten that the finest achievements are not those which create a public stir but those which consist of hard work carefully and enthusiastically done? For instance, there is the social welfare work now organized in the diocese of Newark as the Mount Carmel Guild. The following paper sets forth the purpose and method of this group, which will "have a tremendous practical effect far beyond the frontiers of the diocese and even the visible boundaries of the Church."—The Editors.

THE recent announcement that the laywomen of the diocese of Newark have been organized by its bishop, the Right Reverend Thomas J. Walsh, into a Mount Carmel Guild, with twenty-six independent and fully functioning centres representing a growing membership that has already passed 35,000, is obviously important news to Catholics. But it is much more than that. Any effort dedicated to charity has implications, in the spiritual realm, that touch all men; and in the close material structure of modern life, an effort possessing the scope and balance of the Newark Guild is bound to have a tremendous practical effect far beyond the frontiers of the diocese and even the visible boundaries of the Church. Those who know the character and have followed the labors of Bishop Walsh will see this new organization, in part at least, as a continuation of those labors and a confirmation of his peculiar genius as a religious administrator and leader. Those who approach the Guild's plan of organization and ministry from the outside—without knowing the history of its founder's achievements, or even without sharing his faith—will be struck by the way he has actively fused two almost unmanageably big ideals. Following the plan which, twice before, in the dioceses of Buffalo and Trenton, Bishop Walsh has applied with conspicuous success, the Newark Guild will employ to the full the devices and resources of scientific welfare work. Yet it is a volunteer organization engined entirely by supernatural purpose and working only for the love of God.

The problem that is general to all present-day organized charity—using the term in its most comprehensive sense—is that of balancing the material means against the immaterial end. The formidable body of physical knowledge which the scientific approach to social problems has given us, the tremendous material resources and quite unquestionable material triumphs of modern charitable endeavor, impose their own price. Almost inevitably they hypnotize workers and public alike to a belief in their complete sufficiency. In the Catholic field this danger is diagnosed, of course, from the spiritual viewpoint: if the motive of social effort is anything less than the love of souls for the love of God, that effort is counted a failure, no matter what its practical results. But in the non-Catholic field, too, there is growing a parallel realization: that even the practical results tend mysteriously to fall below par as the mere technique for attaining them is perfected. "External" and "dehumanized" charity is recognized as having some serious weakness, and there is an increasingly generous admission that the Catholic approach, at its best, combats this weakness most successfully. To his coreligionists, therefore, Bishop Walsh teaches a lesson they cannot too often learn: the lesson of the proper balance between the corporal and the spiritual. To those outside, who frequently labor from the loftiest human motives, the Guild will present a dynamic example of the external body of charity kept sound and thriving by a vital inner purpose.

It is an inspiring privilege to be able to observe and actively feel the influence of men whom native power and character make leaders of their kind. The Church today has a group of such leaders, who meet the world with a Catholic friendliness and at the same time without compromise, elucidating her immutable standards and values while taking over what is positive in the world's customs and ideas for her support and service. And among this group it is safe to say there is none more distinguished by energy, hospitality to new ideas and what may be called dedicated intelligence than the bishop of Newark. His career is a continuous record of anticipating the vital needs of his people, and meeting them with a practicality that is compounded of vision and courage.

We have already said that the Newark Guild is the fruit of his long and special effort in the field of diocesan charity. Its admirable structure, described below, a structure both complicated and flexible, was actually first devised twenty years ago. It was when he was attached to the diocese of Buffalo that Bishop (then Father) Walsh began, as a pioneer in the field, to develop the principle of fostering and systematizing the charitable aspirations and efforts of Catholic laywomen. The Buffalo Mount Carmel Guild is still functioning vigorously today, a testimony to the soundness of its organizing principle. He carried that idea to Trenton ten years later, with the same result. The Trenton Guild is still a growing concern, of increasing importance in the charitable work of its section of the state. Its organization has been the immediate model of the Newark Guild, and some of its expert workers have been drafted as counselors and initiators of the new body.

Before passing to a consideration of that body's make-up, it may be pertinent to note another of Bishop Walsh's achievements in Trenton, which shows illumi-

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natingly his ability for supplying practical machinery for the operation of spiritual projects, and his keen sense of the requirements of the times. The unique educational establishment known as the Villa Victoria, which trains teachers for the Italian-American parochial schools, owes its existence and its status as a qualified state school entirely to him. The nuns for whom the Villa serves as an educational novitiate—the Maestre Pie Filippini—represent a teaching order which has done distinguished work in Italy since the middle of the eighteenth century. Attracted by the needs of the large Italian-American population in some of the eastern American centres, members of the teachers Filippini had come to Trenton considerably before Bishop Walsh's time. It was he, however, who envisaged what a potent instrument they might become for the intellectual and spiritual development of his people, and who became their active helper.

His efforts to provide them a material foundation finally brought concrete results, the chief of which, the magnificient contribution of the late James Cox Brady, made possible the purchase of the Villa. His determination to secure for their postulants and novices the best to be had in modern training led to the drafting of an Italian-American curriculum which is the admiration of educators. Two years ago the Villa Victoria was put by the state authorities on a high school and normal school basis. Most of its graduates from these departments are already at work in the Catholic schools of the state. Others, singled out for special training, are completing their B.A. courses at Georgian Court, which will constitute the Villa's college department. The original plan of training only candidates for the order was widened by Bishop Walsh's express intention, so that lay teachers who feel the call to work in the Italian-American field also are received. The expansion of the Villa's plant to accommodate its growing enrolment is now under way, and a mother-house for the community has also been purchased. The Villa Victoria is already one of the most important units in the Catholic educational system, and seems destined for indefinite growth and service.

The best approach to the Newark Mount Carmel Guild is through its stated purpose: "To better the spiritual, intellectual and physical condition of all who shall receive its varied ministrations; to foster the spirit of true charity; to promote cordial Catholic relations among its members and all individuals and organizations properly engaged in charitable work." In a word, it gives to Catholic women the same opportunity for exercising volunteer charity as the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul gives to Catholic men. It not only invites and accepts the various orders of zeal, capacity and experience to be found among them; it also selects and discriminates, assigning particular talents to particular problems. The orders of membership are graded into active, associate, supporting and special benefactors, with a corresponding range in yearly dues from $1.00 to "$25.00 and up." Incidentally, men are permitted membership in any of the last three or "honorary" categories. The active members, of course, are all women. The Guild's work is done from separate centres, each a sort of microcosm or Guild in little. At the present moment, as has been said, there are twenty-six such centres covering the diocese of Newark and absorbing the charitable energies and abilities of 35,000 women. Each centre was organized, after a definite campaign of instruction, by Bishop Walsh in person.

How completely it is organized, by the most exacting standards of present-day social work, cannot perhaps be realized without studying the Guild's department chart. Every one of the twenty-six territorial units has the usual officers of a general committee: the moderator (a priest appointed by the bishop), the president, the various vice-presidents and secretaries required by the committee's size and the scope of its functions. Every unit has, in addition, twenty-five possible sub-committees or departments for, respectively: Americanization, adult reform, boys' clubs, catechetical instruction, cooking, day nurseries, directories, employment, institutional visitors, juvenile reform, legal aid, literature, material transfer, medical aid, motor corps, music, outfitting, parent-teachers associations, physical culture, physical relief, publicity, social centres, social inquiry, travelers' aid and vacation schools. These committees represent, of course, the full list of social needs which must be served throughout the diocese. Not all of them are necessarily in operation in any given centre. There is a nucleus of five or six universally active—those on Americanization, catechetical instruction, social inquiry, vacation schools and physical relief. The others function as local conditions require. But what is important to grasp is that they are all potential committees, not mere paper departments. The problems and special methods proper to each are known from long experience and tabulated in the Guild's archives, and the committees are automatically constituted as soon as their desirability is manifest.

The executive board of each centre comprises the officers of the general committee and the chairman of the special departments. It is bound to a minimum of ten meetings a year, which ensures that its practical business is kept up to date and, equally important, that its esprit de corps is maintained. The general committee has, in addition, its own separate semi-annual meetings, and departmental meetings are as frequent as the nature of their particular problems requires. This firm routine framework of the Guild's activities makes possible the system, despatch and responsibility without which so large an effort would fall to pieces. It is assisted also by the high development of what may be called the Guild's secretariat. Perfunctory or unintelligent work here would be a fatal clog to general efficiency. Hence, complete records, accurately compiled data and prompt business reports are insisted on, and as a result the efforts of these trained volunteers

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might challenge comparison with those of efficient professional secretaries and statisticians.

A special word may be said, even among so much that merits praise, of the departments of social inquiry and catechetical instruction. The records of the first, which form the basis for the Guild's labors in both the material and the spiritual field, must of course be reliable and expertly detailed. They are, in actual fact, models of thoroughness and helpful exactitude, which bear the stamp of long and devoted social experience in their formulation. The catechetical department, for its part, represents so definite an advance beyond the average standards in this field that it will undoubtedly be widely copied or adapted as an individual feature of parish and diocesan work. In each of the Guild's centres the catechists are required to attend a summer course of forty lectures on the content and method of their work. In addition, uniform principles are laid down for teaching. The year's lessons in the Baltimore Catechism, and in Bible and Church history, are outlined, and corresponding passages in a classic commentary on the Catechism are marked for study and exposition. Other texts and spiritual manuals are also recommended. The whole constitutes an admirably modernized technique in a department of the Church's labors where the necessity for it can hardly be overrated.

"Pro Fide et Patria" are the words which the Guild has taken to signalize its purpose. We are fortunate, as contemporaries, in being able to watch the mobilization of that purpose, and in coming under the spell of its example. We are fortunate, as Catholics, in the legitimate pride we can feel in this commanding achievement of one of our spiritual leaders.

METHODISM AND LITURGY

By STUART D. GOULDING

A MORE significant movement in the Methodist Episcopal Church is difficult to imagine than that inaugurated by the last general conference when it authorized the appointment of a commission to revise and prepare a new order of worship and music for use in formal service. Already four orders have been proposed by the great committee working under the leadership of the venerable Bishop Wilbur P. Thirkield of Chattanooga, any one of which will mean the beginning of a new era in the numerically greatest Protestant denomination in America.

In the words of Bishop Thirkield, "the trend toward liturgy in the Methodist Church is an effort to make the worshiper independent of the faults of the minister" by instituting a form of common prayer and service. . . . "The sermon alone cannot weld."

Realization on the part of Protestant denominations that the sermon alone cannot weld has been long in coming. The Reformation brought with it the destruction in the Protestant churches of everything resembling the old order of things. The Mass, music, symbolism in painting and statues, color, everything that would remind the dissenters of the elder faith from which they had seceded, was destroyed or put away. The churches became meeting-houses where men and women gathered to hear the Bible read and its doctrines expounded by their ministers. The appeal was to the soul through the ear alone, and that method continues to the present day in the majority of Protestant churches.

When the Methodist Church came into being, having divorced itself from the Church of England, it was without liturgy. John Wesley drew up a formal order of worship based on the Book of Common Prayer, and it was adopted by the Methodists in America four years before the Protestant Episcopal Church adopted its liturgy. Nevertheless, with the exception of some of the northern and eastern churches, few followed the liturgy; in most of them less formal methods than Wesley advocated were in use. To quote Bishop Thirkield: "So busy had the Methodist Church been expanding over this great country that there was little time for formality."

In the early days the circuit preacher had no time for liturgy. His congregations were found "wherever two or three gathered together." He carried the Bible in his saddle-bags and he improvised his prayers.

True, the spread of Methodism throughout the United States in those early years was little short of marvelous. The more formal churches found their greatest activity in the cities and the more settled regions of the West, but Methodism, and to a lesser extent the Presbyterian and Baptist faiths, reached out to the frontiers and beyond. When the great western plains were still practically closed to the Catholic missionary, Methodism with its tuneful hymns, its fiery revivals and its great preachers, already had a grip on the scattered pioneers and frontiersmen. It held an evangelical and emotional appeal that gripped and fired the religious fervor of those earlier settlers whose lives without such occasional religious revivals and meetings would have been colorless indeed.

As communities became more settled, the need of emotional appeal lessened and was satisfied with the comparatively mild methods of the preachers who held established pastorates. Nevertheless the pulpit and the Bible continued to occupy dominant positions in the church. In our own day the Methodist Church has witnessed a movement toward better music and more dignified service, but even down to the present the

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liturgy of John Wesley never has found the favor that might have been expected.

Of recent years the Methodist Church has felt severely, as have all other Protestant denominations, a lessening of the influence of the Bible. The Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy that followed the scientific negations of the last half-century has had a tremendous and none too happy influence on the congregations. For one thing it has converted many of them into sceptics, and for another it has made them more and more dependent on their teachers. The authority of the Bible having been lessened for many Protestants by the scientific attack upon it, they have turned increasingly toward their ministers.

The domination of the pulpit has been regarded with uneasiness by many thoughtful preachers themselves—and indeed it is the preachers who are responsible in no small measure for the trend toward liturgy. Particularly in the cities where transportation is easy, it has been found that congregations instead of remaining in their parish churches follow the better preachers about; so that while a great preacher may fill his church at all services, a less able man may find himself preaching to half-empty pews. Such a position obviously is unfair to the latter. Though often possessing other talents equally valuable and laboring even more keenly, he finds himself losing ground to men of great preaching power. Nor have the great preachers been happy with such results. Although they must all of them be gratified at their power to attract listeners, most of them are big enough to realize that it is at the expense of their less fortunate though none the less deserving colleagues.

In some instances it has caused the less able minister to resort to spectacular methods to fill his church. Speaking on this phase at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, not long ago, Bishop Thirkield deplored such methods and cited one extreme instance in which the minister advertised in the press that he would preach one night without his coat, the next without his collar and the third night in his bathing suit. The bishop's comment was this:

> When people go to church to be entertained, the entertainment soon fails and they lose interest altogether. The churches which hold their congregations from generation to generation are those in which the service is the central thing. . . . I have worked forty years in the ministry and much of that time has been spent among the lowly in Mexico and other places. I have seen superstition and irreverence. But between superstition and irreverence, I say give me superstition, for at least there exists in the superstitious the feeling of respect for God.

The appointment of the commission on worship and music has resulted from the growing wish to make God's house a sanctuary. Latterly there has come to be felt in the Methodist Church a need for greater warmth, for more color, for symbolism such as the early Christians used in the catacombs beneath Rome. The desire has been to make the church more than just an auditorium. Bishop Thirkield would place the communion table in front of the minister, "that it may be a constant reminder to the people of the sacrifice which it commemorates." He would use the lecturn as the Episcopalians use it, as a repository for the Bible placed in an exalted position. He would bring back the cross to the church as a reminder to the people of that sacrifice. "Often I wish that I might hold before the people the crucifix to preach in silence its powerful message," he has declared. Finally he would robe the minister in the Genevan robe, not only because it commands the respect of the people but also because it enforces an inward respect upon the part of the wearer.

Such changes as the bishop advocates, adopted in their entirety, would mean a radical departure in most Methodist churches; and while in some of them certain formalities always have been observed, there is a feeling, even in the seminaries, that the bishop desires too much.

As regards liturgy, the commission already has prepared four orders. The Christian Advocate says:

> These orders of service offer enrichment in the hour of worship without that hard, dry formalism which is so foreign to the Methodist temper. They point the way to better things. . . .

The first of the orders, that of John Wesley, is still considered by the Christian Advocate as "never popular among us." The other three it hails as very welcome.

The second order of worship is very impressive and borrows freely from the Book of Common Prayer. It begins:

> Let the people kneel or bow in silent prayer upon entering the sanctuary.
> Prelude.
> Hymn (the people standing).
> Call to Prayer.
> General confession, to be said by all.
> Words of assurance, by the minister.
> The Lord's Prayer, to be said by all.
> Anthem, which may be the Venite or Te Deum.
> Responsive reading.
> Gloria Patri.
> Declaration of Faith.
> Gloria Tibi.
> Lessons from the Old and New Testament Scriptures.
> Prayer—Choral Response.
> Offertory.
> Presentation of offerings.
> Hymn.
> Sermon.
> Prayer (the people kneeling or bowing down).
> Hymn (the people standing).
> Silent Prayer—Benediction—Choral Response.
> Postlude.

"Prayer," Bishop Thirkield declares, "is either a mockery or the greatest utterance of man." The Methodist Church already uses some formal prayers but the trend is toward more and more formal ones,

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the belief being that prayers which have been said by men through generations, which are rich in feeling and in substance, are worthy of being used in the service and of perpetuation.

Returning to the move to decentralize the sermon, the bishop has said:

> The reformers made the sermon the central part of the service in their effort to get away from the Mass. But there is a danger in this, since it makes for disloyalty to the service. Catholics go to church to worship and pray while Protestants go oftener than not to hear a good sermon. Let us exalt the pulpit but let us not permit it to dominate.

Finally, the trend toward liturgy is an effort to keep the churches from becoming mere social centres:

> The spirit of competition enters where the social ideal is held up. The rich and the poor, the skilled and the unskilled, cannot meet on an equal plane where there is competition. "A folksy church for a folksy people," which I have seen in some press advertisements for churches, is not the ideal the Methodist Church seeks to foster.

It does seem as though modern conditions are forcing the Methodists toward a new conception, or rather an old conception made new, of divine service. That "the sermon alone cannot weld" is a truth at which they have been long in arriving. Yet no action on the part of the entire church is possible until the next general convention in 1932. That the institution of a liturgy may be defeated by those within the church content with "the old-time religion" is still possible. For many, any liturgy will still smack of "things Popish." The leaders, however, want the change, and for the reasons above indicated. Certainly its adoption would enrich the Methodist Church and would bring to it some of the finer things it has missed these hundred and more years since its inception.

THE BLESSINGS OF DEPRESSION

By GEORGE K. McCABE

ALTHOUGH we unemployed have been consoled for a month or more with the statement that prices have fallen to the levels of 1916, an inspection of our routine purchases fails to verify this news. On inquiry, however, we find that steers, choice carcass, are off $4.50 per hundredweight, while tin has been debased to thirty and a quarter cents per pound; and wool, Ohio delaines greasy basis, has been put within the reach of all by a reduction of ten cents a pound; not to mention copper which may be had for the cartage. Aside from these household necessities we can think of only a very few articles that have been affected by the drastic slashing in the wholesale field: cigarettes, cigars, cotton shirts, coffee, sugar and mutton.

The last three items may save the householder a few cents a day but the restaurateurs have so far refused to change their menus on this account. Of course, we cannot expect the cost of a served cup of coffee to drop from ten cents to five just because Rio number seven has fallen from eighteen cents to nine in Santos. The dominant items in the cost of the beverage at a restaurant table are the overhead expenses. These are commonly looked upon as alibis for the profiteer but it must be admitted that these costs (rent, wages, interest, insurance, depreciation and advertising) are quite inflexible. The rent is fixed by a three or five year lease and insurance by an annual contract; depreciation does not slow down because of a depression in business; wages can be cut only at the risk of a strike, loss of morale on the part of the staff, or expensive and disturbing changes in the personnel.

Not only is the restaurant owner hindered from passing reductions in raw material prices on to his patrons by the rigidity of these expenses but all the middlemen who handle the coffee and sugar, right from the broker at Santos through the steamship company, the jobber, wholesaler, railway company and truckman, down to our proprietor, are in the same position. Their overhead costs neutralize the declines in the price of the product which they handle. A case in point is found in the records of the depression of 1921. The price of shoes fell off 30 percent a year after hides had lost 60 percent of their value. Similarly, in the last year wheat has declined 34 percent, flour barely 10 percent and bread not at all.

However, there is ground for the expectation that the blessings of depression in the form of lower prices will be passed on to the consumer more promptly this time than last because of the dominance of large scale business in the retail field. The chain store and mail order houses will be forced by their own competition to cut quotations and they are better able to do it than were their small scale predecessors because (on account of their more rapid turnover of inventory) they have not been caught with shelves crammed with goods bought at the relatively high wholesale prices of last year. Moreover their purchasing agents are taking full advantage of a time like this to beat down the prices of the commodities they buy.

Although this reasoning applies to the department-store field as well as to the grocery and meat market there are many essential services that will not respond to the downward pressure for a long time. For example, the rates charged for public utility services have frequently moved in the opposite direction from most other prices. The United Railways of Baltimore have just been awarded an increase in fares because rising

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taxes coupled with dwindling receipts have left the stockholders with a return so low as to be considered confiscatory by the Supreme Court. The New York Telephone Company has effected a similar change in rates because the cost per call has risen on account of the growing size of their plant.

At the same time other utilities, like the electric light companies, did not raise their charges during the war because more effective use of coal and the rapid expansion of their volume of business enabled the managers to hand dividends to the owners far above the return enforced by the courts. Then again, the Interstate Commerce Commission raised railway and Pullman rates by 20 percent in September, 1920, just as the peak of prosperity was passed, and other prices were tumbling.

Briefly, public utility rates are not affected by shifts in the general level of prices as much as by such factors as the attitude of the Supreme Court and the regulatory commissions, changes in the volume of patronage, efforts to gain public favor by rate concessions, and internal economies.

Unfortunately there are many other prices that cannot be expected to respond to pressure. Insurance costs are set by boards of underwriters and experts on the basis of an average of losses for many years. Besides there are the fees fixed by tradition like the offering for seats at divine service. Medical practitioners were slow in raising their office fee from two to three dollars. College instructors' minimum has been advanced from $1,500 to $2,100 at last. If general retail prices continue to fall so as to bring the cost of living to within 20 percent of the prewar level these 50 percent increases in professional remuneration might be considered unwarranted except for the fact that these classes were afflicted with unduly low incomes during the period of mounting prices.

Taxes are even less affected by price level changes than are professional fees and salaries. There is talk of postponing the reduction in the net income tax on corporations, not because many of them are not in serious need of this measure of relief but because the revenue sources of the Federal Government are to some extent endangered by the business depression. Receipts from the income tax and from the tariff are expected to show a decline for 1930, whereas the expenditure side of the budget seems likely to rise because of the pressure for social betterment projects like the Pensions Bill, federal aid roads and the construction of government buildings to relieve unemployment. Besides the federal salary rolls and staff are not readily reduced.

However remote falling taxes may be, some benefit will be obtained from the improved content of those articles that are sold at an unvarying or customary price. Though the cost of the five-cent cigar remains the same, we can hope that the manufacturer will substitute tobacco for wrapping paper. The fifty-cent lunch may be expected to become meatier, the fifteen-cent soda creamier and the two-dollar stockings silkier. The promptness with which these improvements will be made depends, of course, not on the substitution of the service ideal for the profit motive but on the ability of the purchaser to compare the offerings of competing merchants. Undoubtedly, one of the benefits of national advertising is the ability of the manufacturer to take advantage of his public at a time like this by refraining from increasing the weight or quality of his article. The cynical have attributed much of the exceptional profits on packaged foods to this cause.

More serious than this transitory advantage is the intensification of the present difficulties in business which results from the unequal and delayed changes in different classes of prices. For example, raw material producers are always, as in the present instance, hit first. Deficient purchasing power is the inevitable result. Probably the most obvious case is the plight of the farmer. What he has to sell has not been within 15 percent of the higher costs of what he has bought since 1920. Mr. H. H. Harlan estimates a monthly deficit in purchasing power of $160,000,000. This has not been felt until lately because the farmer by borrowing from all the banks in his county and imposing on the local merchants for supplies for several years has been buying more dollars' worth than he sold. Now the banks are closing (twenty-six in Illinois in May) and the merchant is helping the receiver close out his business.

Another disastrous effect of this discrepancy between the prices received for raw materials and those charged for finished goods is the considerable decline in our export sales (20 percent so far this year). This is especially applicable to countries like Brazil, Cuba, Australia and Boliva, because they depend almost entirely on the sale of raw products to obtain the funds here to pay us for our manufactures. The prices of the chief exports of these four countries have declined from 25 percent to 60 percent of their 1929 levels.

Until this situation is remedied all the President's public works and all Mr. Lamont's mirages will not pull us out of the slough of despond.

Keep These Words Close

Silence and calm this hour claim my soul;
In their clear light I see where I have erred.
Pursuing self as if self were a goal,
I was too blind to think my vision blurred.
So seeking, lost the very things I sought.
Dearest, I hasten while my eyes are free
To beg forgiveness for the pain I've brought,
For my impatience and my cruelty.

Because I love you and because I know
That in your love for me you will forgive,
Content to suffer my imagined woe
(Yourself the sacrifice that I may live),
I tell you this. Keep these words close, for vain
And weak am I; you'll need them soon again.

MONROE HEATH.

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Places and Persons

DOSTOIEVSKY: WRITER AND MAN

By CATHERINE RADZIWILL

TURGENIEV once called the Russian soul a "dark forest." To no Russian does this definition apply more exactly than to Dostoievsky, one of Russia's greatest writers, and one of the strangest incarnations of the Russian genius of the last century, which was such a curious mixture of foreign influence and developed native knowledge, acquired and expressed with uncertainty as to the course it ought to pursue, and discouragement at a failure which seemed to it inevitable.

This is an essential fact to be remembered whenever an attempt is made to appreciate the forces which drove writers like Turgeniev, Tolstoy and Dostoievsky to express opinions of their native land. It is impossible to pass a general judgment on the tendencies of the school to which these writers belonged. One can only judge its individual members, and even there it is easy to be led astray. In many instances they have displayed brilliancy which diverts attention from the real superficiality of the books in which it appears, books that at first sight seem so marvellously profound, books that tell so much and teach so little.

If Russia had been allowed to develop slowly, and nothing had happened to shake it out of the peace which ought to attend the growth and the healthy development of all human things, it might have outdone every other nation in the world by its vitality, its search after knowledge, its desperate hunting for truth. Unfortunately something was always happening to stop its progress, to throw it back for centuries, to erect a barrier between it and the rest of humanity. During the latter half of the last century there were reforms, admirably conceived, but badly put into execution, reforms which came not as a balm to the outraged portion of the public that had been clamoring for them. There was also nihilism endeavoring to counteract any good these reforms might have produced under different conditions. In our times, it was Bolshevism that appeared, to destroy all that still existed of good in the social condition of Russia, without the slightest idea of what it could put in its place.

Bolshevism, however, was still unknown in those distant days when these three giants of Russian literature, Turgeniev, Dostoievsky and Tolstoy, arose and brought to the world the knowledge of the great power their country could wield in thoughts and ideals. Of these three colossal figures, Dostoievsky is the most appealing, especially to foreigners, and this in spite of the peculiarities of his at times illiterate, but always powerful and too often inexorable, genius. He can touch all the cords of human hearts, and move them not only to indignation but also to tears. And this very fact helps one to realize the deficiencies of his so essentially Russian genius.

Dostoievsky was an abnormal apparition in an abnormal society, a society slowly waking out of a trance which had lasted ever since the political conspiracy of December 14, 1825. There is hardly anything one could call natural, either in himself or in his books, with the exception of The Memories of a Dead House, his masterpiece. This stands alone in the list of Dostoievsky's literary achievements, and reveals him as he really was in his good moments, those moments during which he accepted everything that was befalling him with submission, the Christian submission of a heart that believes in its Saviour's mercy. Later on, after he had returned to normal life, he lost his deep faith while remaining a profoundly religious man—an anomaly which is possible only in Russia. His last years were tormented by the problem of the existence of God, a problem which, to those who knew him and heard him talk, can be detected in most of his later books. In an occidental character, this inner fight of a conscience that still retains faith but has discarded belief, would either be impossible or result in complete atheism. But Dostoievsky's eastern origin and atavism made it easy, and resulted, moreover, in the incoherence which at times makes his books so misleading or incomprehensible to foreigners.

Turgeniev woke up the energy for good of his compatriots, and showed them the real aim humanity ought always to have in view. Tolstoy was an iconoclast, a destroyer, a precursor of Lenin. Dostoievsky was a sufferer, and a Slav sufferer at that, which means that he could apply to his sufferings all the sharp criticism and analysis a Slav mind alone can carry so far. There is a Russian word which describes the type of which he was the most perfect example and incarnation. This word is "stradatel" which means "endurer." The entire life of the gifted writer who had had the courage to describe the physical, moral and intellectual tortures to which he had been subjected, without any bitterness or animosity, was a long and noble endurance of a hard and undeserved fate.

But this endurance, this absence of revolt which is so distinctively Russian, Dostoievsky possessed only in personal matters. In his novels and other books, such as The Journal of a Writer, for instance, he often lets loose his bitterness at the spectacle of the many injustices one meets in this world of ours. There is hardly anything but bitterness, revolt and suppressed impatience in The Brothers Karamazov, in The Idiot, in The Devils. There is a good deal of it in Crime and Punishment, but there we also find traces of pity,

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the humble Russian pity which sees redemption in every tear, finds excuses for every crime, accepts humiliations, bows down before every suffering, and which is expressed so well in the exclamation of Raskolnikov falling at the feet of Sonia, the street girl: "It is not before thee that I am bending the knee, it is before the suffering of humanity!"

Dostoievsky's greatest and most intimate friend, Vladimir Soloviev, the Christian philosopher, who was undoubtedly one of the most luminous figures of his time, once described him as "a mind that just lacked the conception of wrongdoing, even while seeing it, and sometimes performing it." The words, with their deep meaning, resume better than anything else which has been said on the subject, the intricacies of a nature that was perpetually longing for the unattainable, continually striving for high ideals, and that failed to understand how the thought of evil ever could enter a human soul. At the same time, none could analyze and describe crime, sin and iniquity better than this extraordinary writer. Like all persons afflicted with epilepsy, he was oversensitive in some things. His nervous sense of research made him insist on useless details which he liked to accumulate in his books, often to the detriment of their artistic value, and always to the loss of the particular impressions which he had been trying to produce upon his readers.

During the last five or six years of his troubled existence, Dostoievsky used to say that it was in Siberia that his literary talent had developed itself. Together with some of his other admirers, I will venture to say that this was not the case. He may have acquired there the note of sadness which followed him everywhere after he had been released from prison, and the years he spent in confinement undoubtedly paralyzed to some extent his mental qualities, by driving them constantly toward one and the same point—undeserved human suffering. But they did not exercise any influence upon his creative genius. Raskolnikov in Crime and Punishment, Stavrogin in The Devils, the brothers Karamazov—none of these personages was conceived in the Siberian dungeon where Dostoievsky lingered four long years. They are the product of the much later time, during which his genius expanded and ripened amid anxieties, worries without end, a sharp struggle for life and, most of the time, uncongenial surroundings. It is doubtful whether he could ever have invented and created such characters when he was confined within the dark cells of the Omsk penitentiary.

The only distinctly Siberian book the great novelist ever wrote was The Memories of a Dead House and, curious to say, it is the only one to which the word "serene" can be applied. There is nothing but peace in its pages, and this notwithstanding the horrors with which it is filled. It differs absolutely from his other stories, that often are as savage, as violent and as incoherent as Dostoievsky himself was at times.

During the years which he spent in prison, Dostoievsky assimilated the mentality of his country's lower classes, which other Russian writers, Tolstoy, for instance, never quite succeeded in doing. On the other hand he lost his contact with the social spheres in which he had moved previous to his imprisonment. This probably accounts for the fact that his books rarely contain the bitter analysis of the intelligence and moral principles of well-educated people which we find in Turgeniev's or Gogol's works. He is always at his best in his descriptions of human temptation or of crime, no matter in what form, but he loses himself in useless analyses, and becomes absolutely garrulous whenever he tries to explain the mental problems and preoccupations of people seeking or hungering for the truth. In the importance which he attributes to imaginary conflicts of the soul, Dostoievsky shows himself far more brutal than his contemporaries. But he is infinitely greater in his understanding of the weaknesses of humanity. He taught the whole of Russia how to weep, how to forgive, and how to forget the evil done to one. In this respect his work and his teachings were eminently civilized, and they left an impression not only on his own generation, but also upon the succeeding ones. The moral which he preached survived him, although his personal influence quickly vanished after he had passed away.

Curiously enough it was during the epileptic fits from which he suffered all through his life that Dostoievsky had the keenest vision of what awaited both him and Russia in the near future. It was while he was undergoing one of the worst attacks of his burdensome sickness that he composed, in the intervals between the fits which prostrated him, the masterpiece, The Devils (called The Possessed in the English translation). The previsions which the story contains are at times quite uncanny; they anticipate almost entirely the sinister aspects of the Russian revolution, and create the prototypes of many of its leaders.

In this extraordinary book Dostoievsky appears almost diabolic and yet he was far from that. He believed in an all-powerful and all-merciful Being whom one ought to worship and in whom one ought to hope. This is what the reader of The Possessed should never forget. Dostoievsky was not the terrible creature one might think him by taking this work too literally. But it is typical of his badly balanced mind, in that it shakes us with dismay and dread, and some of its pages make us almost feel the flames of hell itself. Take for instance the following lines, which I must hasten to say were suppressed finally from the volume when it went to print, Dostoievsky himself realizing the sinister effects they might have in some quarters:

> There was a day on earth, and in the middle of the earth stood three crosses. One on the cross believed so much that He said to the other for his belief: "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise." The day passed, both died—and found neither paradise nor resurrection. What was said on the cross turned out a lie. That Man was

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> the highest product of the earth. The whole planet with all that there is in it, with all that has been and will be, is not worth a single word of that Man! Never before, nor after, will there be anything like Him. . . . And now, if with Him a lie happened, if the laws of nature did not spare even Him, and caused even Him to tell a lie, to believe in a lie and to die for a lie—then the whole planet rests on a lie and a mockery. Therefore the very law of the planet is a lie, and the whole of life is the devil's farce, if there were a devil. And if so, wherefore live? Answer if you are a man, if you are an honest man. Suppose I alone say that I am God. But if I am God, I wish to be like the former God, I wish to judge the planet, to alter the revolting lie of its law, and if that is impossible, then to destroy it! But since I do not know how to alter it, and cannot destroy it, then I, God, wish to destroy myself!

Dostoievsky was in many ways the most typical representative of the generation of dreamers who undoubtedly contributed to develop in Russia the atmosphere of negation, nihilism and doubt of everything out of which finally emerged Bolshevism with all its sinister accompaniments. At the same time he was one of those beings to whom much ought to be forgiven, because they are unable to render, even to themselves, an account of what they are really thinking or believing. Judging him, one must recapitulate all the vicissitudes of his life, spent partly in prison, partly in exile from his native land, partly in poverty and penury. When the hour struck for Dostoievsky to meet his Maker he prepared himself courageously for the ordeal, insisted on a priest being brought to hear his confession and administer to him the last sacraments. And his last conscious gesture was to try to reach a New Testament which the wives of the exiled Decembrists had given to him in Siberia, and which had never left his bedside since. It was in its pages that he had found consolation and strength during the dreadful years he had spent in the Omsk penitentiary, and it was in that same book that he discovered the faith and courage to die serenely, with "sure and certain hope in eternal resurrection."

Nightfall

All day within the winding gardens
I have paced, and in the maze,
And on the stones beside the water-lily pond;
All day the shadow on the dial has moved
A little further on its little round;
All day the clouds have wandered
Over the crystal, over the fragile sky—
As idle fancies in me too have trailed
As idly through my sky, and been but clouds
To hide the clearer sky, or light
That only serves to hide a star.

But now the milky flower fades,
Is drooping, and the dark leaves fall;
The stars are moving in the waving glades
Like words of poems, crisp and sharp and small.

A. J. M. Smith.

COMMUNICATIONS

NEO-PAGANISM

Rome, Italy.

To the Editor:—I had intended not to afflict your readers with any further discussion of paganism, new or old. But in your issue of May 28 Mr. Donald Powell, of Norwalk, Connecticut, takes the button off the foil by saying, "If Mr. Michael Williams is correct, Mr. Wickham is [himself] a pagan."

To prove his point he quotes from Mr. Williams's "Middletown to Rome," in The Commonweal of April 30: "He [Mr. Wickham] lives in Rome . . . not a member of the Catholic Church, in fact so far as I know, he is still, as ever, personally detached from all organizations." To which Mr. Powell adds, "A pagan, as defined by Webster, is one who is neither a Christian, a Mohammedan, nor a Jew; and, as defined by Catholics less kindly than Mr. Williams, is one who is not a Christian. Mr. Wickham will hardly agree with these definitions, but they are of record, nevertheless."

On the contrary, I agree with them perfectly, especially with the one put on record by those Catholics less kind than Mr. Williams. Nor do I think that even the kindliness of Mr. Williams will be found to be of that mollycoddle sort which would prevent him from calling a spade a spade. One is a pagan who is neither a Christian, a Mohammedan, nor a Jew. One also is a pagan who is simply not a Christian. The definitions do not enter into all the theological and philosophical niceties of the subject. Either one of them is roughly and sufficiently accurate for every-day speech. But what have they to do with me?

True, I am not a Mohammedan, and not a Jew. But not even Webster makes Mohammedanism and Judaism the only escapes from the swamps and deserts of Pagania. Of course, if Mr. Powell merely wishes to assert that I am a sinner, there is no argument, and I certainly shall not prolong this now intolerably personal discussion by offering, to him at least, so much as a plea in abatement. But by what authority does he classify me among infidels and unbaptized persons? Why, upon the authority of Mr. Williams.

This, Mr. Powell, is what comes of fencing with mere words, maneuvering for merely verbal advantages, and paying no attention to the core of meaning which sometimes even words inclose. Not to be attached to any organization does not necessarily signify that one has no attachment, no love for, or belief in any organization, nor did Mr. Williams anywhere imply that I was unattached in this utter and damnable sense. Moreover, word-splitting aside, the plain fact is that I am not a pagan, unless my total disattachment from that mode of thought makes me one according to some other page of Webster yet to be cited. But of course if the idea be—as I am sure it is not—to call attention to my practical shortcomings, and to be extreme to mark what is done amiss, why, vide ut supra.

Mr. Powell's thesis (or Miss Thesis, to use one of his own expressions which here would seem to have a certain aptness) contains another implication, unexpressed but nevertheless felt, namely, that, in the eyes of Catholics not entirely blinded by kindness, none are Christians save those who are communicants of the Church—or, in more Norwalkian language, of the "Catholic Church."

I am afraid that Mr. Powell does not quite grasp the exceeding catholicity of Catholicism. Moreover, had he really listened to those Catholics less kind than Mr. Williams, above all had he thought to consult someone in authority, he probably would

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have learned that even I, even himself, even that Bertrand Russell whom he so mch admires, even Jews and Mohammedans and the worshipers of Baal are, whether Christians or not, nevertheless Catholics in the sense of rightly belonging to the Church. He says that philosophical and legal studies are "far behind" him. This is unfortunate, and I hope he will eventually find time to take them up again. But he probably still understands what is meant by the rights of eminent domain. One may fail to realize it, or fail to acknowledge it. But it is simply impossible here on earth to stand outside of the universal. The only question is that of our relation to it, which cannot be that of absolute non-attachment.

I therefore make bold to assert that notwithstanding my alleged paganism and Mr. Powell's declared indebtedness to "Gilbert White, Richard Jefferies, Alexander Smith and other such simple fellows," we both are Catholics in so far as we are anything at all, and that the feast of Christ the King was proclaimed for us as well as for others. Indeed, it is not so easy to be a pagan as it was in the days of Pericles.

I may even venture, I think, to claim that I am a Catholic in a narrower sense—say politically, and in philosophy. Yes, I am even a papist, and regard the reformation as a calamity second only to the great rejection of the Jews, though doubtless a calamity necessary to the final perfection of some pattern which we cannot see. I regret that I am not a Catholic in the commoner and yet fuller and deeper meaning of the word. But as I cannot accept Mr. Powell in lieu of a father confessor, this is no place for the whys and wherefores. From what little I know of theology, however, I would say that in the case of all "pagans" such reasons may be roughly grouped under two heads, superbia and invincible ignorance.

Here, since it is obvious that I am not a Protestant, Mr. Powell might have had me. His fencing is childlike, but a direct thrust might have run me through. He might have accused me of wilful blindness; of arrested spiritual development; of inconsistency; of pride, vainglory and hypocrisy; of being stiff-necked, or weak-kneed; of clinging to reserved sins; of lack of heart and of faith, or of bad faith; of being slothfully stuck in the mire of ancient habit, et cetera ad infinitum. But he forbore. So I shall always remember him with a kindliness almost equal to that of Mr. Williams, remember him as one pottering amiably among his "innumerable seedlings," his "several hundred gladiola bulbs," and laughing with Santayana, "Gentlemen, it is April!"—even though it was then already May, and time runneth now to August and September, and the night cometh when no man shall work, least of all in a pagan garden.

HARVEY WICKHAM.

FROM TEMPERANCE TO WHEELERISM

Tuxedo, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—I wish to congratulate Mr. C. P. Conolly on his letter in The Commonweal of June 18. My felicitations from the point of view of fairness, vision, accuracy, and last—but not least—courtesy in his intelligent reply. "May his tribe increase!"

ALICE G. WARREN.

The title page and index for Volume XI of The Commonweal are now ready. These will be sent upon request. Arrangements have been made for binding Volume XI in leather or cloth. Information on binding will be given upon application to the offices of The Commonweal.

THE SCREEN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Let Us Be Gay

WE ARE beginning now in earnest to get the crop of Broadway hits that Hollywood deems suitable for transcription to the screen. Up to recent times, the process or adaptation to a silent screen left the plays almost unrecognizable. Only self-explanatory action could be used, and those plays which depended above all on apt dialogue were either discarded entirely as unsuitable for the screen or so twisted and turned and padded with "action" as to change their whole character.

Recently, however, dialogue has brought the author into his own. A play that depended on dialogue now becomes a screen play equally dependent on the incisive word. Some of the best screen products of recent weeks have been plays of this type—Disraeli, Courage, Holiday (reviewed below) and, with reservations, Rachel Crothers' Let Us Be Gay. In the present instance, the screen is fortunate in having Marie Dressler to take the part of that rampaging old dowager, Mrs. Boucicault. She dominates the screen play almost as effectively as Charlotte Granville dominated the stage play. Miss Dressler is limited, however, by the fact that movie morals (or possibly Kansas legislation?) rule out the famous cigar-smoking scene. The effrontery with which the old lady of the play puffed at a long cigar, in orthodox Amy Lowell fashion, supplied not a little of the character and atmosphere. Miss Dressler has to do with gruff speech what Charlotte Granville did so effectively in smoke!

The play concerns the efforts of lady Boucicault to bring together a divorced couple named Brown, by having both of them as guests at a week-end party, and supplying sundry foils in the form of eligible young men and women. The Browns, for various sufficient reasons, conceal their former relationship from the rest of the guests until matters become hilariously complicated. Then all ends suddenly and happily—as, of course, you knew it had to all along.

The entire worth of the stage play rested in deft characterization and amusing dialogue, well carried through by a capable cast. The screen has preserved most of these values, except in the sad case of Rod La Rocque, who is quite as inept in this drawing-room piece as in the screen version of Molnar's The Swan. Mr. La Rocque talks in the fashion of a traveling salesman who has about half finished a course in elocution. His diction is deliberate, monotonous and marred by a strong sectional blur. In contrast with the accomplished performance and speech of Gilbert Emery, he gives one the unhappy impression of being a hastily rehearsed amateur.

Norma Shearer, on the other hand, takes the rôle once played so delightfully by Francine Larrimore, and carries it off with grace and point. Her voice matches her personality and records with smoothness and variety. Her scenes with Gilbert Emery have almost the lightness, vivacity and naturalness of the stage itself.

The reception accorded a play of this character should cause a sharp revision upward in appraisal of the much maligned movie mind. No chronic theatre audience was ever quicker to catch the delights of tripping dialogue than the few thousand movie fans who happened to fill the house at the time I saw this picture. I am sure that if the Hollywood producers have the courage to go ahead, they will find that a rather hungry audience of many millions is waiting for the refreshment of skilled authorship displayed in plays with quick, intelligent and witty dialogue —not to mention that more terrible adjective, "subtle."

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Holiday

PHILIP BARRY'S Holiday is an even more exacting test of the possibilities of movie audiences than Let Us Be Gay. The Barry "whimsicality" is already a theatrical tradition—a type of humor that rests as often on intelligent nonsense as on situation. But the very literal and excellent adaptation of Holiday to the screen seems to find audiences quite as receptive and delighted as any of the would-be intellegentsia who rallied to the support of the play. Even the famous speech ending "and that, my children, is how I met your grandmother" loses none of its hilarity through a changed audience atmosphere.

Possibly the greatest surprise of the screen season is the admirable flair with which Ann Harding carries off the rôle of Linda—supposed to be the private property of Hope Williams. Without copying the Williams mannerisms, and with rare intelligence and understanding of the part, Miss Harding creates Barry's slightly pathetic heroine in a style all her own. Her amazing success in this really difficult task gives Miss Harding the best right she has ever had to be considered among the first rate actresses of our times. She has, I think, grown considerably in her work since leaving the stage—grown, that is, in moderation, in smoothness, in comedy sense and in power to get inside her part. On the stage, she was inclined to become over-emotional and heavy-handed, and to use her quite extraordinary beauty self-consciously. These tendencies have disappeared entirely in her work for the screen—which, if you consider a similar growth in the work of Ruth Chatterton, suggests that Hollywood directors may be quite up to the level of the majority of stage directors in New York.

Of course there is one important difference between stage and screen acting which may account for this. A scene on the screen can be repeated over and over again until the actor's work entirely meets the director's ideas, whereas, on the stage, the director's influence is felt only during the four weeks' rehearsal, and must be practically withdrawn during the actual performance. Stage directors often complain bitterly of the free hand which actors take once an audience is in the house. But the screen director has every action under his immediate control as effectively as the leader of an orchestra. The actor's work, as we finally see it on the screen, represents not only the director's exact idea of how the scene should be played, but it also represents the actor's best effort, rather than his or her average effort. This fact may account sufficiently for the notable improvement in several stage stars since the transfer of their affections to the screen.

The entire case of Holiday is far above par, with one part—that of Linda's brother—taken by the same man who created that interesting rôle in New York. Mary Astor is quite credible as the sister, and all the scenes are run off with a smoothness and lightness which does credit not only to the director, but also to the important mechanical improvements in recording and screening which have become so marked of late. The play itself is one of the best, in light vein, of recent seasons, combining a clean atmosphere with wit, grace, contrast of moods, and a central idea of far more importance than its apparently care-free treatment might indicate.

Who Wants To?

Who wants to be wise,
Renowned as a sage,
Since wisdom like wine,
Only ripens with age?

LE BARON COOKE.

BOOKS

Concord's Greatest

Emerson: The Enraptured Yankee, by Régis Michaud; translated from the French by George Boas. New York: Harper and Brothers. $4.00.

THE custom of endowing a biography with an explanatory and somewhat exuberant title or subtitle—King Spider, The Stricken Deer, The Enraptured Yankee—is to be deplored. Whether descriptive or not, such epithets are needless and in doubtful taste. "The Enraptured Yankee" sounds painfully familiar when applied to a man who all his life repelled familiarity.

Yet M. Michaud has given us a vivid and animated picture of Concord with its group of aspiring philosophers, and Emerson as the bright particular star of its somewhat mirky firmament. No better description could be asked of these enthusiasts who believed that Utopia could be reached by substituting linen for wool, and water cress for roast beef; men who thought the Dial intellectual, and Brook Farm practical, and Margaret Fuller an Egeria. They press so closely around the central figure that we see more convincingly than ever the accuracy of Mr. W. C. Brownell's comment: "Emerson did not care enough about his friends to discriminate between them."

He did not care; but what, one wonders, did he think? The man who resigned his Boston pulpit at twenty-six because the attenuated ritual of Unitarianism was still too ritualistic for him; the man who was "bored by the sick and repelled by the dead"; who found Christianity, even in its earliest inception, distasteful to his mentality; but who held his soul high above reproach, paying supreme homage to the moral law; what had this detached spirit in common with the vaporings of Alcott, or the easy emotionalism of Channing? He shrank sensitively from the overflow of talk that streamed wetly about him; yet beneath his roof was born in 1836 the most conversational of all infants, the Transcendental Club.

It was the golden age of lectures. Even England went to them, albeit reluctantly, as Lamb bears witness; but in New England they were the high-toned diversion of the educated. Emerson chose lecturing, not only as a means of livelihood—it is that today—but actually as a method of conveying his message to the world, which sounds incredible. Michaud says that he treated an audience like an assemblage of demigods, which may in some measure account for his popularity. Certain it is that for years before the publication of his essays he poured into attentive ears the philosophy that sounded so inspiring and was so irretrievably unsubstantial. The staying power of Christianity is its acceptance of the facts of life. As long as man is possessed of eyes and ears and a modicum of intelligence he knows that all is not well with the world. This knowledge is the first step toward betterment. "Emerson," says Michaud, "saw the grandeur, but not the misery of mankind." He had never been an observer of life, or a reader of history.

Yet his chosen friend was Carlyle. The man who was "all incarnate reserve and discretion," and the man who was "all ejaculations and sarcasms," decided in twenty-four hours upon a lifelong friendship, and, after a fashion, clung to it. They had tastes in common, and inhibitions in common; a leaning toward German ideality, for example, and a mutual indifference to the supreme value of French thought. Emerson bore lightly "the sorrowful burden of human knowledge"; Carlyle took it dreadfully to heart. Emerson honored human nature with-

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out analyzing it; Carlyle humiliated it to the dust, but bore for it an angry love. He set a higher value on character than on institutions.

Perhaps the best story ever told of Emerson (it does not seem to have reached M. Michaud's ears, and is probably apocryphal) might have been told as well of Carlyle. An agitated Adventist met the philosopher sauntering peacefully through the streets of Concord. "Be warned! Be warned!" she shouted. "In three days the world will be destroyed." "I don't care," he answered. "I can do without it."

AGNES REPPLIER.

Destructive Synthesis

Death and Renewal, by Poul Bjerre; translated from the Swedish by I. von Tell. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.00.

THE first Swedish edition of this book was sold out in a week. Its author is described as "a specialist in psychotherapy and a philosopher." But this work is neither a scientific treatise nor a philosophical study. It is a work of "psychosynthesis." The world is beginning to tire of analytic books and people. We on this continent, at least, are rapidly becoming synthetic even in our food and drink. It should not be a matter of wonder if the vogue of psychosynthesis surpassed the popularity of psychoanalysis, despite the advantage of the latter in its appeal to the libidinous. For Dr. Poul Bjerre makes no attempt to eradicate morality by analysis; he simply obliterates religion by synthetic methods.

When Aristotle wrote his famous studies in logic they were called the Analytics. Since that time there has been a curious connection in the human mind between logic and analysis. But a synthesis need not be logical: it may even be irrational—if we are justified in judging from such efforts as have been made in recent years to present a synthetic view of life and its problems. At all events, Bjerre pays no homage to Athena. His rôle is rather that of the oracle. His doctrine is esoteric. His utterances are cryptic. Despite his promise in the early pages of his book, the promise of a new revelation, one cannot penetrate into the secret mysteries without initiation.

To begin with, one must first learn to look for life in "the rhythm of the clair-obscure", the ebb and flow of disintegration and renewal. A life beyond is a chimera. For "woe unto those fools who ponder about a 'life to come' and all conceivable inaccessible things"! Soon you will learn to recite a new creed beginning "I believe in God's death in all the dead orbits in which suns and planets move." Then you must bow to the precepts of a new decalogue whose first commandment is: "Thou shalt have no gods . . . but in everything thou shalt look for the divine." In due time you will learn to use the most sacred terms of Christian theology—redemption, Incarnation, salvation, Golgotha and Tabor—as symbols of the vicissitudes of life and death and renewal, as pulses in the rhythm of recurrent effluence! When you are fully initiated you will be able to make this prayer for a happy death: "When the hour comes, when my body must dissolve and my soul evaporate, may my love be full and ripe. May no thought and no longing prevent death from reaching the final depth. And may no earthly beauty, no heavenly glory, bar the way to renewal in its ascent towards the height of heights."

Psychiatrists may call this philosophy. Philosophers will call it nonsense. For a Christian it is blasphemy. In his early days Giovanni Papini wrote pessimistically in his Un Uomo Finito of the emptiness of such a philosophy of life. But

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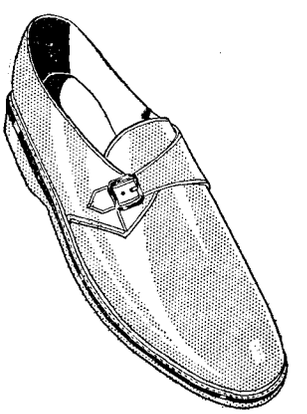

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Poul Bjerre is infatuated with his vacuous vision and waxes lyrical about the "clair-obscure." There is a touch of Coleridge about his writing. Not Coleridge the philosopher but Coleridge the opium-saturated dreamer. Unfortunately no "person on business from Porlock" interrupted these muddled musings. That unfinished portrait of a vanished dream, Kubla Khan, will endure long after Death and Renewal, for all its grace and charm of words, its euphonious language and its truly poetic beauty, will have gone the way of all best sellers.

The translator has done his (or her?) work admirably. The English is not merely correct. It is delightful. Only one familiar with Swedish could say whether it accurately renders the original. But what matters it? The content of the book is at best negligible. The form alone commends it. One only regrets that Von Tell's literary gifts were wasted on such intellectual trash.

GERALD B. PHELAN.

Around Saragossa

A History of Spanish Painting, by Chandler Rathfon Post. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. $25.

"IT IS scarcely possible that anyone should realize the defects of my book more than I," Professor Post declares in his introduction to the three published volumes of a projected detailed history of Spanish painting. But one might well write no more of them by way of comment than to say that it is scarcely possible to enumerate all the virtues of this book. The style may suffer, indeed, from that excess of scholarly care to which a modern work of the kind is doomed. One misses the fine skill which the best French historians seem to be born with, and regrets that modern efficiency must perforce shy away from poetry. What a book old Doughty might have made of this, or what a glow Ruskin infused into far less impressive research! When you have said this much, however, criticism ceases and approval begins. Here is a perfectly marvelous abundance of information and pertinence of remark.

After noting that the individuality of a period in art history seems less a matter of racial peculiarity than of epoch, Professor Post concedes something to the widely alleged Spanish idiosyncracies—emphasis upon aristocracy, a tendency to like sombre themes, religious fervor, a love of the gorgeous, naturalism. This introductory chapter, one of the best things of its kind, should be read by all students of Spanish history and art. The first volume then chronicles preromanesque and romanesque painting, differentiating in so far as that is possible between the work of diverse regional schools. Available information, bequeathed by a long sequence of scholars, is sifted, developments are neatly traced, and the author is almost always able to add some new knowledge he himself has acquired. The illustrative material included in the first volume is typical and may without hesitation be termed far superior to what has been available hitherto. To me this discussion of the romanesque period, with its constant suggestion of Byzantine contacts and models, proved the most engrossing of Professor Post's three sections.

The second and third have to do with the Gothic styles, which successively revealed French, German and Italian affinities. It was no easy matter to define each; and the meticulous tracery of the narrative is surely the best possible preparation for that ultimate synthesis of mediaeval art which cannot as yet be undertaken. Separate chapters are devoted to the more important masters—Pedro Serra, Borrassa and the rest. The narrative is brought down to about 1450, when the Flemish influence began to modify very considerably the drift of

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Spanish painting and to prepare the way for the masters of the golden age.

Professor Post's sympathy with Spanish civilization, religion and achievement is unflagging and admirable. There is hardly a trace of fog—inner or outer—in the whole work. From every point of view it is a big and fine scholarly job. When completed it will doubtless take, and hold for a long time, the enviable position of the standard treatise. One merely wishes the publishers would allow themselves the luxury of an occasional illustration in color. Thus they might add in no small degree to our general profit and pleasure.

AMBROSE FARLEY.

Dante and Nonsense

New Light on the Youth of Dante: The Course of Dante's Life Prior to 1290 Traced in the Inferno, Cantos 3-13, by Gertrude Leigh. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $5.00.

SANS valeur. It is evidently the work of a dilettante, who may well have read some of the many good books listed in the bibliography, and may well have spent "over thirty years" in the study of Dante and his times, but the results of her labors are certainly a monstrous abortion. The thesis is false both in content and method, and it is furthermore incongruous, ridiculous, untenable. The author starts with a baseless, fantastic notion of her own, "the identification of the journey through the infernal regions with Dante's own journey through life," and with several other preconceived notions, such as the repeatedly exploded one that Dante was a heretic continually harassed and pursued by an army of tireless, iniquitous inquisitors who prevented him from ever expressing openly his real religious and political beliefs; and that other one, all her own, that contemporary, historical events are allegorically referred to in this supposed chronological autobiography of Dante. Then she proceeds to read into the text all sorts of impossible and ludicrous meanings, misunderstanding, misinterpreting and even distorting it in her awful translations to suit her end. And she never once seems to think of The Inferno in relation with the other two canticles, composing all together the most perfect trinity in the unity of art: she does not realize the incongruity of her findings in relation to The Commedia as a whole, and is not even aware of the many glaring contradictions to her thesis to be found in The Inferno alone. Moreover, she does not stop to ask herself the question why so much secrecy in referring to historical events well known to everybody; nor does she once wonder at the stupidity of the many inquisitors, so sharp, so terrible and yet so gullible! Indeed, the errors are so many and so gross—linguistic, historical, philosophical and theological errors, as well as errors of logic and common sense—that only the most candid ignorance can overlook them.

However one would be strongly tempted to take no cognizance of the work at all if a certain provoking note—apparently the result of prejudice against the Church of Rome—were not sounded throughout the book; which prejudice perhaps explains the author's concept of a heretic Dante, her misunderstanding of the whole mediaeval period, and the very origin of her strange thesis. However that may be, the work, which in any case should not end abruptly in the middle of the exposition of the thesis, does not commend itself either for its authoritative scholarship or its scientific method of research. To review it thoroughly would be to accord it a consideration it does not deserve. Requiescat in pace.

ANGELO LIPARI.

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Briefer Mention

Paris, by Raymond Escholier. New York: Lincoln MacVeagh, The Dial Press. $5.00.

THERE are many books about the queen city of the Seine, but M. Escholier seems to have written the most intelligent of them all. It is neither a manual of information nor a guide to the best hotels and restaurants. Summarizing the intrinsic greatness and charm of Paris, the book treats of history, art and landscape with rare affection and knowledge. A chapter on old houses is virtually a compendium of the Parisian past; another on museums suffices to initiate anyone in the wonders of priceless collections; and still another devoted to the great churches is written with fine verve and insight. Other things receive attention, too, and M. Escholier is both a man of wit and a lover of his theme. The illustrations, of which there are many, have usually been selected and printed with care, although the typography of the book (made in Italy) is far from nearly perfect. Six colored plates by Nicolas Markovitch may please some readers more than they did the present reviewer, who happens not to care much for impressionistic wash drawings of city streets in which old houses seem perennially on the verge of toppling over. It may be added that the volume will make as fine a gift to one who knows Paris as to the person setting out on his first voyage to Montparnasse.

Very Good, Jeeves, by P. G. Wodehouse. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Incorporated. $1.00.

IN ADDRESSING himself to Mr. Wodehouse's work, the reader almost automatically formulates one of those conclusive periodic sentences begining with "If." If greatness consists in spreading the rich happiness of laughter, in the unflagging invention of fresh farce and in the mastery of a gorgeously funny idiom, then P. G. Wodehouse is a great man. Of course the cream of Wodehouse is Jeeves (with a strong minority report for Archie Meacham) and the formula of the Jeeves stories is one of the soundest ever discovered. The motif in each case is rescue: Bertie Wooster, the lovable halfwit whom Jeeves calls master, is always, to employ his own unbetterable locution, "knee-deep in the bisque." Without Bertie to extract from the bisque, Jeeves, that Crichton of valets, who is as real a creation as Sherlock Holmes, would be nowhere. Bertie is his foil, his occasion, his catalytic agent; and Bertie is also the emitter of that inimitable lingo that keeps the reader of this priceless nonsense constricted and weak with laughter. In his brilliant essay on satire, Father Knox, who is a panjandrum among humorous philosophers, speaks of Bertie Wooster with serious respect. It is entirely proper that he should do so.

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